

What is Claimed is:

1 1. An outer tubular member for use in an elongate blade assembly of the type having
2 a flexible inner member adapted to be rotatably disposed in the outer member and to have a
3 cutting tip positioned adjacent an opening in the outer member, the said outer tubular member
4 comprising

5 a proximal end, a distal end having said opening therein and an inner diameter, and a
6 tubular wall extending between said proximal end and said distal end and having an inner
7 diameter greater than said inner diameter of said distal end to facilitate passage of the cutting tip
8 of the inner member during insertion in and removal from said outer member.

1 2. An outer tubular member as recited in claim 1 wherein said tubular wall is swaged
2 to form said distal end in unitary construction with said tubular wall.

1 3. An outer tubular member as recited in claim 1 wherein said distal end is formed
2 separately from said tubular wall and secured thereto.

1 4. An outer tubular member for use in an elongate blade assembly of the type having
2 a flexible inner member adapted to be rotatably disposed in the outer member and to have a
3 cutting tip positioned adjacent an opening in the outer member, the said outer tubular member
4 comprising

5 a proximal end having a longitudinal axis therethrough, a distal end having said opening
6 therein and an inner diameter, and a tubular wall extending between said proximal end and said
7 distal end and having a bent portion forming an angle with said longitudinal axis to extend away

8 from said longitudinal axis, said bent portion having an inner diameter greater than said inner
9 diameter of said distal end to facilitate passage of the cutting tip of the inner member during
10 insertion in and removal from said outer member.

1 5. A method of performing a surgical procedure on a patient comprising the steps of
2 treating tissue of the patient with an elongate blade assembly formed of a first elongate
3 outer tubular member having a first configuration and a distal end with an opening therein and an
4 inner elongate member rotatably disposed in the first outer member and having a cutting tip
5 disposed adjacent the opening in the distal end of the first outer member, the outer and inner
6 members having proximal ends adapted to be received in a handpiece such that the inner member
7 is rotated within the outer member to cause the cutting tip of the inner member to contact and
8 treat tissue at the opening in the distal end of the first outer member;
9 removing the inner member from the first outer member;
10 inserting the inner member in a second elongate outer tubular member having a second
11 configuration different from the first configuration and a distal end with an opening therein such
12 that the tissue treating distal end of the inner member is disposed adjacent the opening in the
13 distal end of the second outer member; and
14 treating tissue of the patient by contact with the cutting tip of the inner member at the
15 opening in the distal end of the second outer member.

1 6. A method of performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 5 wherein the
2 first outer member has a first longitudinal configuration and the second outer member a second
3 longitudinal configuration different from the first longitudinal configuration.

7. A method of performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 5 wherein the first outer member has a first distal end configuration and the second outer member has a second distal end configuration different from the first distal end configuration.

8. A kit for use in performing a surgical procedure with an elongate blade assembly comprising at least two elongate outer tubular members, each having a different configuration and each having a distal end with an opening therein; and an interchangeable elongate inner member having a cutting tip for positioning adjacent said opening in said distal ends of each of said outer members, said interchangeable inner member being insertable in and removable from each of said outer members during a surgical procedure.

9. A kit for use in performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 8 wherein said outer members, each have a different longitudinal configuration with at least one of said outer members having at least one bend from a longitudinal axis thereof and said wherein inner member is flexible.

10. A kit for use in performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 9 wherein at least one of said outer members has multiple bands.

11. A kit for use in performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 8 and further comprising a plurality of said interchangeable inner members.

- 1 12. A kit for use in performing a surgical procedure as recited in claim 8 wherein said
- 2 outer members each have a different distal end configuration.